



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

OFFICERS

Arita W. Coupe, Esq.
Chair of the Board
Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.
Vice Chair of the Board
Walter J. Stewart, Esq.
Board Treasurer
Wayne Pacele
President & CEO
G. Thomas White III
Treasurer & CFO
Roger A. Kinley, Esq.
General Counsel & GC
Janet D. Frate
Secretary
Andrew N. Rowan, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President
Operations
Michael Markarian
Executive Vice President
External Affairs

STAFF VICE PRESIDENTS

John Bahr
Senior Vice President
Communications
Patricia A. Forkan
Senior Vice President
International
John W. Grandy, Ph.D.
Senior Vice President
Wildlife & Habitat Protection
Constance Hankman-Whitfield
Senior Vice President
Prionthology
Holly Hazard
Chief Innovations Officer
Heidi Prescott
Senior Vice President
Campaigns
Geoffrey L. Handy
Media and Online
Communications
Katherine B. Liscomb
Administration &
Animal Care Centers
Jonathan R. Loomis, Esq.
Animal Protection Litigation
Kathleen C. Milani
Investigations and Video
Mayun Park
Farm Animal Welfare
Nancy Perry, Esq.
Government Affairs
Robert G. Roop, Ph.D., SPHR
Human Resources &
Education Programs
Melissa Selde Rubin, Esq.
Field & Emergency Services
John M. Snyder
Companion Animals
Martin L. Stephens, Ph.D.
Animal Research Issues

DIRECTORS

Leslie Lee Alexander, Esq.
Patricia Marcus Asp
Peter A. Bender
Eric L. Bernthal, Esq.
Barbara S. Brick
Arita W. Coupe, Esq.
Neil B. Fang, Esq., C.P.A.
Jane Greenspan Gels
Jennifer Leaning, M.D., S.M.H.
Kathleen M. Leshan, Esq.
Dwight E. Lowell II
William F. Mancuso
Mary I. Max
Patrick L. McDonnell
Gil Michaels
Judy Ney
Sharon Lee Patrick
Judy J. Peil
Marian G. Probst
Joshua S. Reidert, Ph.D.
Marlynn G. Seyler
Walter J. Stewart, Esq.
John E. Talt
Andrew Weinstein
Pursla White
David O. Wiebers, M.D.

Testimony in Opposition to H.B. 6553

An Act Concerning Sunday Hunting

March 9, 2009

Dear Members of the Environment Committee:

On behalf of our more than 174,000 Connecticut members and constituents, I submit this testimony **IN OPPOSITION to House bill 6553, An Act Concerning Sunday Hunting.**

Sunday hunting has been banned in Connecticut since colonial times. There is no compelling reason to lift this prohibition. Lifting it will exacerbate conflicts between hunters and other land users and present a variety of threats to landowners and wildlife enthusiasts. There should be at least one day a week when non-consumptive wildlife enthusiasts can enjoy their recreation in relative quiet and safety. Hunters already enjoy recreational opportunities disproportionate with their numbers, and this legislation creates an even greater imbalance among outdoor users. In Connecticut only 1% of residents hunt, while more than 28% of people enjoy wildlife non-consumptively, whether bird watching, hiking, or practicing wildlife photography.

Arrows know no boundaries and pose public safety hazards to anyone who is in a large radius of the hunter. In short, expanding recreational opportunities for bow-and-arrow hunters diminishes opportunities for hikers, horseback riders, bird watchers, and others. Domestic animals, such as dogs and horses, are sometimes mistaken for game animals by hunters. In areas where hunting is permitted, farmers, homeowners, and outdoor enthusiasts may simply fear being struck with an arrow. This concern is more acute than ever with longer hunting seasons, greater kill allowances, and unyielding human developments in forested areas. Hunters argue that hunting is "safe," yet a recent scientific study documented how deer-vehicle collision rates actually increase on opening day of hunting season.

The extension of the hunting season to Sundays will not achieve meaningful deer population reduction. Rather, it will increase public safety risks and decrease public enjoyment of the outdoors.

Bow hunting is among the cruelest forms of hunting. Although a well-placed arrow can kill a deer quickly, most arrows are not well placed. Wounding rates in the scientific literature are high, ranging from 20% to 55% of the deer struck. Bow hunters routinely spend hours tracking the blood trails of deer struck by arrows before the animals finally bleed to death. Moreover, three decades of research tell us that for every one or two deer struck by arrows and retrieved by bow hunters, another wounded deer disappears, never to be found. Hunters should be held accountable for these inhumane acts.

Bow hunts are also too inefficient to significantly reduce large urban deer populations. For example, in one published case of a high deer density area being effectively reduced by bow-hunting, it took 66 hunters a total of 371 outings to kill 22 deer on a 53 acre site (Kilpatrick, H.J, and W.D. Walter, 1999).

This legislation takes us in precisely the wrong direction, given the demographic trends evident in Connecticut. The public does not want hunting on Sundays, and lifting the prohibition will jeopardize public safety and diminish outdoor opportunities for non-consumptive users. Again we urge the defeat of House bill 6553. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sean Guinan
Urban Wildlife Program Coordinator
The Humane Society of the United States
CT Field Office - 30 Hazel Terrace, Suite 25
Woodbridge, CT 06525
203-389-4411

Citations:

Boydston, G.A. and Gore, H.G. 1987. Archery Wounding Loss in Texas. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Austin, Texas. 16pp.

Cote, S.D.; T.P. Rooney, J.P. Temblay, C. Dussault, and D.M. Walter. 2004. Ecological impacts of deer overabundance. *Annual Review of Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics* 35:113-147.

Gladfelter, H.L. and Kienzler, J.M. 1983. "Effects of the Compound Bow on the Success and Crippling Rates in Iowa." *Proceedings of the Midwest Bowhunting Conference*. Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Edited by Beattie, K.H. and Moss, B.A. pp 215-219.

Gladfelter, H.L., Kienzler, J.M. and Koehler, K.J. 1983. "Effects of Compound Bow Use on Hunter Success and Crippling Rates in Iowa." *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 11(1):7-12.

Gregory, N.G. 2005. Bowhunting deer. *Science in the Service of Animal Welfare*. Universities Federation for Animal Welfare 2005 (14) 111-116.

Langenau, Jr., E.E. and Aho, R.W. 1983. "Relative Impact of Firearms and Archery Hunting on Deer Populations." *Proceedings of the Midwest Bowhunting Conference*. Wisconsin Chapter of the Wildlife Society. Edited by Beattie, K.H. and Moss, B.A. pp 97-121.

Langenau, Jr., E.E. 1986. "Factor Associated with Hunter Retrieval of Deer Hit by Arrows and Shotgun Slugs." *Leisure Sciences* 8(4):417-438.

Moen, A.N. 1989. "Crippling Losses." *Deer and Deer Hunting* 12(6):64-70.

Nixon, C.M., L.P. Hansen, P.A. Brewer, J.E. Chelsvig, T.L. Esker, D. Etter, J.B. Sullivan, R.G. Koerkenmeier, and P.C. Mankin. 2001. Survival of white-tailed deer in intensively farmed areas of Illinois. *Can. J. Zool.* 79: 581-588.

Stormer, F.A., Kirkpatrick, C.M. and Hoekstra, T.W. 1979. "Hunter-Inflicted Wounding of White-tailed Deer." *Wildlife Society Bulletin* 7(1):10-16.